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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/086,877	03/04/2002	Junichi Shiomi	50063-064	1977

7590 12/09/2004

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Washington, DC 20005-3096

EXAMINER

KIM, CHONG R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2623

DATE MAILED: 12/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/086,877	SHIOMI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Charles Kim	2623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,8,9,11,13 and 14 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 2,5,7,10,12 and 15 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 March 2002 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/19/02</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

1. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ushio et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,271,047 (“Ushio”).

Referring to claim 1, Ushio discloses a device for detecting an end point of polishing of a substrate, comprising:

- a. a camera configured to obtain a two-dimensional image of a substrate surface targeted for polishing (col. 7, lines 20-25);
- b. an image characteristic value calculator configured to calculate a characteristic value for the two-dimensional image by analyzing the two-dimensional image (col. 3, line 65-col. 4, line 44); and
- c. a polishing end point determinator configured to determine an end point of polishing of the substrate according to the image characteristic value (col. 4, lines 2-17).

Referring to claim 3, Ushio further discloses that the image characteristic value is a difference statistic index that substantially represents a statistical value regarding pixel value

differences in the two-dimensional image (col. 4, lines 24-43. Note that the “difference from a selected local minimum from a selected local maximum” in lines 32-33 is interpreted as a difference statistic index).

Referring to claim 4, Ushio further discloses that the polishing end point determinator determines a time of the end point when the image characteristic value has reached a predetermined threshold value (col. 4, lines 2-17 and col. 6, lines 64-67).

Referring to claims 6 and 11, see the rejection of at least claim 1 above.

Referring to claims 8 and 13, see the rejection of at least claim 3 above.

Referring to claims 9 and 14, see the rejection of at least claim 4 above.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 2, 5, 7, 10, 12, 15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. Birang et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,399,501 discloses a method for detecting a polishing endpoint with optical monitoring.

b. Ihsikawa et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,458,014 discloses a method for detecting a polishing endpoint based on a two-dimensional image.

c. Lustig et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,433,651 discloses a method for detecting an endpoint based on optical measurements.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charles Kim whose telephone number is 703-306-4038. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon thru Thurs 8:30am to 6pm and alternating Fri 9:30am to 6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amelia Au can be reached on 703-308-6604. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ck
ck
December 6, 2004


AMELIA M. AU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600